OSS

ORGANIZATION OF

SELF-INSURED SCHOOLS

August 14, 2012

MEMORANDUM FOR: JPA Liaisons, Contact People/Safety Officers Servicing Agents

SUBJECT: Bleacher Safety

A number of OSS districts have recently been contacted by businesses offering to inspect and repair bleachers. As you will note in the attached letter prepared by Phil Combest, Senior Manager, Poms and Associates Risk Services, an annual bleacher inspection should be conducted, but that task can be undertaken and recorded by district staff.

If you have any questions please contact me.

Henry Brock,
Risk Manager

10646 S. Bethel Avenue, Selma, CA 93662-9325
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Poms & Associates
Insurance Brokers, Inc.

Dr. Henry Brock III
Organization of Self-Insured Schools (OSS)
10646 S. Bethel Avenue
Selma, CA 93662-9325

Dear Dr. Brock,

I was copied on the recent email exchange regarding bleacher inspections, so I offer the following additional information:

Many school districts and public agencies are unclear as to the requirement to conduct regular inspections. There are a number of documents that prescribe requirements for bleachers, including the US CPSC publication 330 (www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/pubs/330.pdf), NFPA 102 (www.nfpa.org/aboutthecodes/AboutTheCodes.asp?DocNum=102), and the California Building Code. Entities under the jurisdiction of the State Architect are covered by Title 24, which incorporates ICC Standard 300 by reference in section 1025.1.1. I've attached the section that mentions inspections to this letter. Specifically, entities are required to have a "qualified person" inspect all "bleachers and grandstands" on an annual basis. As an aside, these guidelines are for the most part in harmony.

The reason for the inspection requirement is that certain grandstand structures, as in stadium seating and large telescoping bleacher structures, present a significant loss exposure if not properly maintained in good condition. The codes do not specify the qualifications of a "qualified person" but these are often contractors or engineers. There are a number of contractors who offer this service in California. A quick internet search yielded the following three results, although this is not an endorsement of these companies:

http://www.americaneagleent.com
www.facili-serv.com
http://www.tomark.com
http://www.americangrandstandseating.com

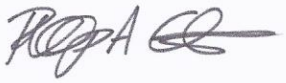
The detailed nature of the inspection would depend on the size and type of structure. For example, a small three-tiered seat bleacher next to a soccer field would not merit the same amount of time and attention that a grandstand stadium seating 2000 people would. A large grandstand should be closely and completely checked for weld cracks, deformations,

missing fasteners, etc., while a small bleacher could be inspected relatively quickly by a lesser qualified person.

While Poms & Associates does quickly check the condition and presence of guardrails on bleachers during our regular Loss Control & Safety Audit, we are not normally crawling underneath and checking for weld cracks, missing fasteners or components, etc. When large bleacher structures, such as grandstands or telescoping bleachers are present, we normally make a recommendation for ongoing preventative maintenance and regular inspections. While there is no specific enforcing agency for this requirement, whether or not an entity is performing inspections would come into play if there was ever a loss relating to a bleacher. Districts should make a decision as to whether or not to outsource this inspection based on their resources and the expertise of their personnel. One benefit to outsourcing inspections is that a contractor may offer preventative maintenance at the same time, which could extend the service life of these valuable structures.

Please let me know if I can help further.

Sincerely,



Phillip A. Combest, CSP, ARM-P, ALCM, CPSI
Senior Manager, Risk Services

Attachments: ICC300, Bleacher Inspections

CHAPTER 5

EXISTING BLEACHERS, FOLDING AND TELESCOPIC SEATING, AND GRANDSTANDS

SECTION 501
APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION

501.1 General. Existing bleachers, folding and telescopic seating, and grandstands that exist prior to the adoption of this standard shall comply with this chapter and the applicable provisions of Chapter 1.

> **Exception:** Tiered seating where the top of footboards, seatboards, aisles and cross aisles are not more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below, unless judged by the code official to represent a distinct hazard.

501.2 Inspection. All existing tiered seating shall be inspected and evaluated at least once a year by a qualified person for compliance with the provisions of this chapter. All folding and telescopic seating shall be inspected to evaluate compliance with the manufacturer's installation and operational instructions, including an inspection during the opening and closing of such seating.

501.3 Violations. Where deficiencies are identified, the owner shall have until [DATE TO BE INSERTED BY JURISDICTION] to abate the unsafe condition as deemed necessary by the code official.

501.4 Alterations. Alterations to any tiered seating shall conform with the requirements of this standard for new construction. Portions of the structure not altered and not affected by the alteration are not required to comply with the requirements in this standard for a new structure.

SECTION 502
MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

502.1 Structural. Existing tiered seating shall be maintained structurally sound as follows.

1. Components or fasteners shall not be broken, damaged, badly deteriorated or missing.
2. Adequate bearing shall be provided. The structure shall bear uniformly on the floor or ground in a manner so as to safely support the structure.
3. All components and systems shall be in proper working condition.

502.2 Durability. Materials used in the construction of outdoor installations shall be weather resistant. Where wood is used, it shall be naturally durable or preservative-treated wood as defined in the building code or other approved material. Where ferrous metal is used, it shall be protected from corrosion. Fasteners shall consist of aluminum or other approved corrosion-resistant materials or shall be provided with approved corrosion-resistant coatings such as copper or zinc.

502.3 Interior corrosive environment. Installations located in interior corrosive environments, such as those located in conjunction with indoor pools, shall be corrosion resistant.

502.4 Spaces beneath seats. Spaces beneath or adjacent to seating structures shall comply with the building code and fire code.

SECTION 503
GUARDS

503.1 Required guards. Guards shall be provided in the following areas.

1. Along open-sided walking surfaces, cross aisles, stepped aisles, ramps and landings of tiered seating areas which are located more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below. Such guards shall be not less than 36 inches (1067 mm) high, measured vertically above the leading edge of the tread, adjacent walking surface or center of adjacent bench seat.

   Exceptions:

   1. Where the uppermost seat is located less than or equal to 55 inches (1397 mm) above the floor or ground below.
   2. Where located adjacent to a wall and the space between the wall and the tiered seating is less than 4 inches (102 mm).

2. Unless subject to the requirements of Item 3, a guard with a minimum height of 26 inches (660 mm) shall be provided where the floor or footboard elevation is more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below and the guard would otherwise interfere with the sightlines of immediately adjacent seating.
3. A guard shall be provided for the full width of the aisle where the foot of the aisle is more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or ground below. The guard shall be a minimum of 36 inches (914 mm) high.

503.2 Opening limitations. Open guards shall be constructed of materials such that a 4-inch-diameter (102 mm) sphere cannot pass through any opening.

> **Exception:** The triangular opening formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail at the open side of an aisle stair or tiered seating shall be of a maximum size such that a sphere of 6 inches (152 mm) in diameter cannot pass through the opening.

503.3 Guard design. Guards and their attachment shall be designed to resist the loads indicated in Section 303.

SECTION 504
OPEN SPACES AT FOOTBOARDS AND SEATBOARDS

504.1 Open spaces at footboards and seatboards. Where an opening between the seatboard and footboard is located more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or ground below, the opening shall be closed with construction such that a 4-inch-diameter (102 mm) sphere cannot pass through.

Exception: Where the uppermost seat is located less than or equal to 55 inches (1397 mm) above the floor or ground below.