



Safety advisory groups after the inspection

What the 37 recommendations mean for organisers

The findings, the dates to plan for, the government review, and what to do now at every level

OTAS Insight LG-003 | Operational note • Tactical • Strategic

Correct as of 20 October 2026 | England and Wales | Not legal advice | otas.live/insights/



The short version: what changes, and when

The report

37 recommendations

- Published 4 September 2026
- Event safety framework inconsistent
- SAGs have no basis in law
- Government review recommended by Aug 2027

Not changed yet

The law for organisers

- SAGs still advise only
- They cannot approve or prohibit events
- Organisers keep their legal duties
- Recommendations are not law

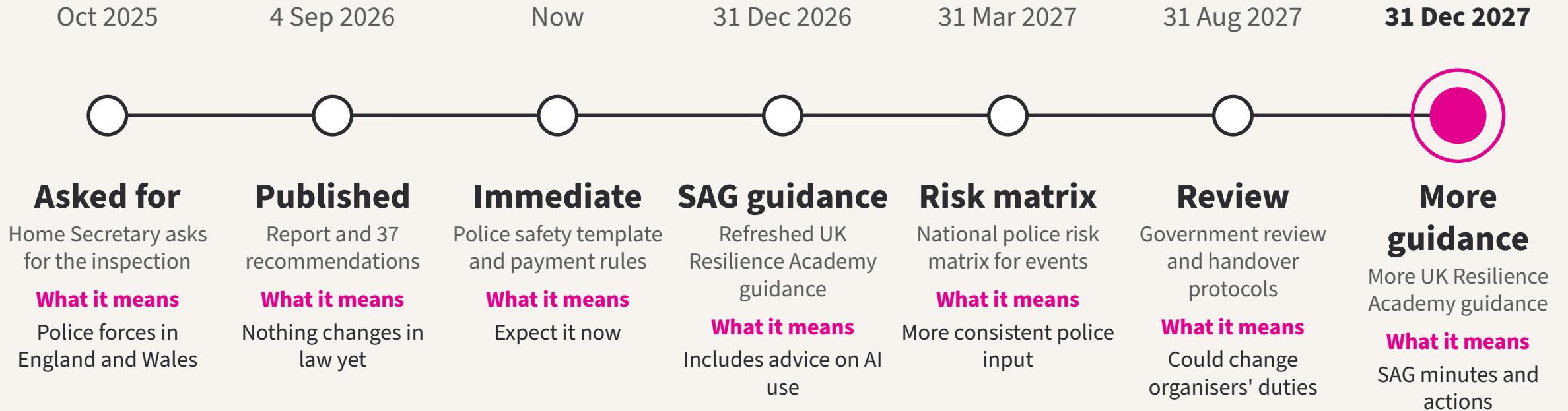
What to do

Prepare for 2027

- Set out responsibility by area
- Have insurance evidence ready
- Plan around the new guidance

England and Wales. Scotland and Northern Ireland differ. General information, not legal advice.

The dates in the recommendations



These are recommended dates, not legal deadlines. We found no government response on GOV.UK on 20 October 2026.

What the inspection found

01 • Finding

No basis in law

SAGs are non-statutory, and the way they work differs vastly

Some areas have none

02 • Finding

Police guidance

Commanders not well prepared for SAGs, and no national risk matrix

A matrix is recommended

03 • Finding

No certification

Most public events have no safety certification regime

Unlike some stadiums

04 • Finding

The Purple Guide

Overstates the legal responsibility organisers actually have

The inspectorate's view

05 • Finding

Shared duty

Duty of care depends on control: primary inside the site, shared beyond it

Zone Ex is unclear

06 • Finding

Insurance and AI

Insurance checks vary. Organisers answer for every document, however produced

Declaring AI use is encouraged

Source: HMICFRS report, 4 September 2026. HSE: SAGs cannot approve or prohibit events.

What a SAG is, and is not

- **A forum** For discussing and advising on public safety at an event, usually led by the local authority.
- **Non-statutory** No legal powers or responsibilities.
- **Cannot approve** It is not empowered to approve or prohibit events.
- **Organisers keep duties** Organisers and others running the event keep the principal legal duties.
- **Advice, with reasons** The SAG explains what needs more thought. The organiser decides what to do.
- **Separate powers** Members such as the police may act under their own powers, not as the SAG.

What may change

Guidance refreshed by December 2026

Training mandated for SAG chairs

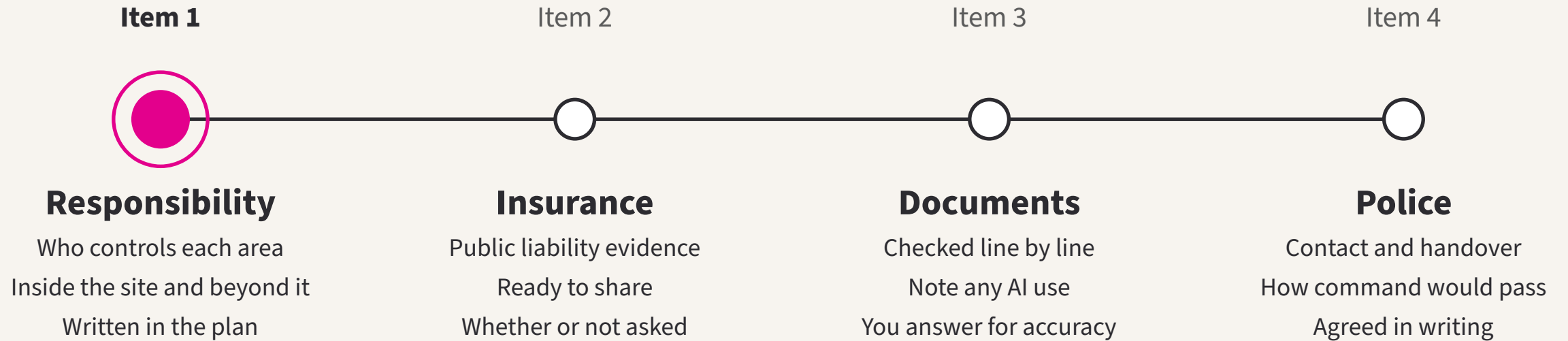
Oversight a national function by March 2027

Status statutory SAGs, for the review

For now

SAG advice is advice. Your legal duties are your own.

Four things to have ready for your next SAG



Why now: the recommendations point SAGs and the police towards these questions through 2027.

37 recommendations, one review

37

recommendations from the policing inspectorate, including a ministerially led government review of event safety, recommended by 31 August 2027. No government response yet.

Certification. A safety certification regime for public events, and whether organisers should have to hold public liability insurance.

SAGs. Whether SAGs should become statutory, and whether one body should regulate non-sporting events.

Responsibility. The level of responsibility in law for the police and for event organisers.

Qualifications. The different levels of professional qualification needed to manage public safety.

The review is asked to look at the questions below, as a minimum. They are questions, not decisions.

Operational: nothing changes on the day

- **Follow the plan** The event plan and your briefing still apply.
- **Report concerns** Tell your supervisor or event control about any safety concern.
- **Beyond the site** Report concerns outside the event boundary too.
- **Know who leads** Know who is in charge in each area, as briefed.
- **Hand over clearly** If command passes to the police, follow event control.
- **Keep records** Note what you saw and did, as your supervisor asks.

Whose duty it is

Organisers and others running the event keep the legal duties. SAGs advise.

What may change

- More consistent SAG questions
- Standard police templates
- Written handover protocols
- Clearer roles beyond the site
- Briefings that reflect them

Nothing in law has changed yet.

Tactical: what event, safety and operations leads put in place

01

Responsibility by area

Who controls each area, inside and beyond the site

Keep: plan section, dated

02

Insurance evidence

Public liability cover, ready for the SAG

Keep: certificate copy

03

Document checks

Every AI-assisted line checked by a person

Keep: note of AI use

04

Police handover

How command would pass, agreed in writing

Keep: signed protocol

05

SAG advice log

What the SAG advised, and what you did

Keep: action log

06

Guidance watch

Refreshed SAG guidance recommended by December 2026

Keep: review date

Three levels: Operational for crew on the ground, Tactical for event and safety leads, Strategic for organisers and directors.

Strategic: what organisers and directors decide

Step	What it looks like	Evidence to keep
Know your duties	Take advice on your legal position, based on control	Advice note
Plan 2027	Build the new guidance into event timelines	Timeline
Police payments	Only under section 25 of the Police Act 1996	Agreement
Insurance	Appropriate public liability cover for each event	Policy schedule
AI policy	How the team may use AI in safety documents	Policy
Competence	Qualified people managing public safety	Training records
Watch the review	Recommended by 31 August 2027	Review date
Other nations	Scotland and Northern Ireland differ	Local checks

Not a legal standard or a complete list. The recommendations are not law.

What we don't know yet: 6 open points

01 • Awaited

Government response

None found on GOV.UK on 20 October 2026

Now: check before 2027 planning

02 • Due

Refreshed SAG guidance

Recommended by 31 December 2026

Now: use current guidance

03 • Due

Review outcome

Recommended by 31 August 2027

Now: plan for change

04 • Unclear

Scotland

Not covered by the inspection

Now: check with the council

05 • Unclear

Northern Ireland

Not covered by the inspection

Now: check local arrangements

06 • Unclear

Area beyond the site

Zone Ex has no consistent definition

Now: agree it locally

Open on 20 October 2026. This deck gives no view on any particular event, force or council.



Supporting Events
and Professionals
at every stage

Work with OTAS

Is your event ready for the questions safety advisory groups will ask in 2027?

Request a call with OTAS to discuss how we can help

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Get free notifications at otas.live/insights/, or follow @otasliver on X.

Errors are corrected openly, on every format, and logged with the date.

Key sources: HMICFRS report (4 September 2026) and terms of reference; HSE SAG guidance; Licensing Act 2003; Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982

Spotted an error? Tell us using the contact details on the OTAS Insights page.

General information, not legal advice. Correct as of 20 October 2026. England and Wales.

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Briefing card • about 1 minute

“Before we start: tonight's plan has been through the safety advisory group, but the plan and the duties are ours. Follow your briefing.

If you see a safety concern, inside the site or outside it, tell your supervisor or event control straight away.

Supervisor: _____ **Call sign:** _____

Event control: _____ **Police contact:** _____

If event control tells you that command has passed to the police, follow their instructions and keep the public informed as briefed. Any questions?”

For events in England and Wales. Fill in the blanks first.

Before the next SAG: the checklist, by level

Operational follow the plan; report concerns, including outside the site; follow event control on any handover.

Tactical responsibility by area; insurance evidence; AI-assisted documents checked; police handover agreed.

Strategic advice on your legal position; 2027 timelines; police payments under section 25; watch the review.