



Wednesday 18th February

Dear ,

I am writing initially to all Premier League and Football League clubs as Chief Executive of the Football Supporters' Federation, the national body for football supporters, representing 500,000 individual and affiliated members throughout England and Wales.

Every season we receive correspondence from fans of clubs who reach the FA Cup final, complaining that not enough tickets go to supporters of those teams. The two finalists receive 25,000 tickets each, which fans feel is far too small a number given Wembley's 90,000 capacity. Around 17,000 tickets go to Club Wembley while the remaining 23,000 go to the "football family" via the FA, clubs, and other bodies.

As Ivan Gazidis, Chief Executive of last year's winners Arsenal and Chief Executive of the FA's International Committee said: "We fully understand this is the showpiece FA fixture to celebrate the game as a whole, but we also believe the loyal supporters of the competing teams deserve a greater chance to see their team play in what is one of the biggest matches of the season. The balance in the FA's allocation system is not right ... there will be many disappointed Arsenal fans, who have supported the Club home and away for years, who will be unable to get a ticket to this historic match."

Thousands of tickets issued by the FA for their showcase event find their way onto the black market, often at extortionate prices. Others do make it to fans of the competing teams but often not to those who would receive them under the priority scheme which a club itself would use to determine allocation.

Even if tickets are not "touted" there is still a lack of transparency in the manner in which clubs can use their allocation. While each club is given 25,000 tickets there is a need for FA regulation on what proportion can be used by club officials, players, guests, or sponsors.

The FSF supports the notion that tickets are allocated by the FA to the football family, especially those who have volunteered in the game. But we feel it is much more appropriate if these allocations are made to leading England internationals rather than for the FA Cup final where fans of the competing clubs should be the priority.

We encourage all professional clubs not appearing in the FA Cup final not to claim their allocation so that a far higher proportion of tickets go to the competing clubs. We encourage all clubs to take this message back to the FA – next time it might be your club that reaches the final, and your fans losing out.

With that in mind we have two questions we would be grateful if you could respond to as we intend to promote best practice. We know some clubs are already doing this and would like to give them a higher profile:

1. Do you support the principle of more tickets for the FA Cup final being allocated to the clubs competing in the final?
2. If your club does not reach the final, do you already, or would you be willing to not claim your full allocation of tickets?

The FA Cup is a great competition but every year its reputation suffers as loyal fans of the finalists miss out and too many tickets are regurgitated via the black market. It is in all of our interests to do something about that and I'd be very pleased to hear from clubs or officials who would like to work with us on this.

Yours faithfully,



Kevin Miles
Chief Executive,
The Football Supporters' Federation



The Football Supporters' Federation - The Cherry Red Records Fans' Stadium, Jack Goodchild Way,
422a Kingston Road, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, KT13PB.

Tel: 0330 44 000 44 **E-mail:** info@fsf.org.uk **Web:** www.fsf.org.uk

The FSF is supported by the F.A, the Premier League and the Professional Footballers Association