MEMORANDUM TO SCHOOLS:

PORTABLE SOCCER GOAL POSTS

DN/04/00544

On 28 June 2003, a three year old girl suffered fatal injuries sustained when an unsecured portable soccer goal post overbalanced and fell on her.

I wish to draw to the attention of all members of the school community, the dangers associated with the use and storage of portable soccer goal posts.

A portable soccer goal post is any free standing soccer goal designed to be moved from field to field, or to different areas on a field, or on and off a field before, during, or after practice or a game.

Portable soccer goals are owned predominantly by local soccer associations and stored at local council facilities. Schools regularly use council facilities and grounds for sports competition. Consequently, students may use portable soccer goals in game situations or participate in other sport activities where the goals are located or stored. Schools may also have purchased or manufactured their own portable goals.

It is critical that portable soccer goal posts be securely anchored during the game in order that they do not overbalance and should be stored in a secure place or in a manner that renders them safe.

The dangers associated with unsecured or unanchored portable soccer goal posts had been recognised in 1999 with the death of a child in almost an identical tragedy. In response, the NSW Office of Fair Trading, in conjunction with Standards Australia, developed a guideline that addresses the manufacture, safe design, installation, use and storage of portable soccer goal posts. It was issued to all schools in 2000.

As a reminder and a reference for schools, extracts from the Standards Australia guideline HB 227-2003 - Portable Soccer Goalposts-Manufacture, Use and Storage are attached. A full version can be purchased by visiting www.sai-global.com or http://www.standards.org.au/

The NSW Office of Fair Trading is currently working to set new standards in portable goal post safety. In the interim, schools are reminded to consult the current guidelines when they are likely to use portable soccer goal posts and be familiar with the dangers, should they use facilities where portable soccer goals are used or stored.

For further information, contact David Power, Manager, School Sport Unit, on telephone number (02) 9707 6910.

Trevor Fletcher

DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL

SCHOOLS

3 February 2005
PORTABLE SOCCER GOAL POSTS-MANUFACTURE, USE AND STORAGE

The following extracts from HB 227-2000 - Portable Soccer Goal posts-Manufacture, Use and Storage, produced with the approval of SAI Global, provides school communities with significant safety advice.

Schools considering the purchase or assembly of a portable soccer goal post are reminded that the NSW Office of Fair Trading is currently working to set new standards in portable goal post safety.

The full version of the current guideline may be sourced from the distributors of Australian Standards SAI GLOBAL site at:

www.sai-global.com

1. Safety Guideline

This guideline has been developed to provide guidance on the manufacture, installation, use storage and maintenance of portable soccer goalposts (PSGs).

It is intended for use by soccer officials and players, sports club personnel, school officials, sports equipment manufacturers and purchases, parents, coaches, council employees and any other person concerned with soccer goal safety.

The aim of the Guideline is to prevent deaths and serious injuries arising from these goals tipping over if weight is suspended from the crossbar, the upright posts are pushed forward, the rear ground bar is lifted, or people climb on the goal netting or framework.

A portable/moveable soccer goalpost, is any free standing soccer goal designed to be moved field to field, or to different areas on a field, or on and off a field before, during, or after practice or a game. The Guideline includes indoor goals but does not include goalposts inserted into the ground in any way.

These goals may either-
(a) full size goals used outdoors for senior soccer games or training; or
(b) smaller size goals used outdoors for junior soccer games or training, or at indoor facilities.

3. Anchoring and equipment

It is important that PSGs are anchored at all times when in use to prevent the goal overbalancing.

All suppliers of PSGs should provide anchoring equipment with goalposts. Anchoring equipment should be supplied with any new PSG as an essential part of the equipment, not as an accessory.

Anchoring equipment, including brackets and staking pegs, should, where possible, be permanently and securely attached to the goal frame.

Instructions for anchoring should also be provided and PSGs should always be anchored in accordance with instructions.

6. Instructions for users
(a) Securely anchor/counterweight PSGs at all times in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions.
(b) Net pegs should only be used to secure the net. Never use net pegs to anchor the goal structure.
(c) Never allow anyone to climb on the netting or goal framework
(d) Instruct all appropriate personnel on the safe handling of, and potential dangers with, PSGs.
(e) Check for structural integrity and proper connecting hardware before every use. Replace any damaged or missing parts or fasteners immediately.
(f) Any padding on the goal structure should be checked, adjusted and if necessary replaced, to ensure it adequately protects players.
(g) If a breakage of any part of the goal occurs during a game or training, play should be halted
immediately and the goal repaired before continuing use. If the goal cannot be effectively repaired within a short period, it should be removed altogether and safely stored.

(h) The rules of Soccer state that PSGs can only be used if they are anchored securely to the ground. Officials should be aware of their responsibilities in this regard.

(i) If the PSG can be dismantled, follow the manufacturer’s instructions concerning correct assembly/disassembly of parts.

(j) Ensure adequate personnel are available to move a PSG with consideration given to the weight of the goal. Always employ correct lifting techniques when moving PSGs to avoid injury.

(k) PSGs should be safely stored to prevent unauthorised use and potential injuries.

11 Storage
Multi-piece PSGs should be disassembled and stored under cover, if possible, to prevent weathering.

One piece PSGs stored outside should be chained and locked together face to face and/or secured to an immovable object. Netting should be removed.

All PSGs should be stored in a place where children cannot gain access and use them.

More useful information regarding this issues can be found on the Dept of Tourism, Sport and Recreation site at http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/media/soccer_goalposts.asp