

Response from the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games to the Economy, Culture and Sport Committee's report: *Just the Ticket: the ticketing arrangements for the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games*

Letter received from Paul Deighton, Chief Executive of LOCOG, 18 October 2011:

Thank you for your letter enclosing the London Assembly 'Just the ticket' report and its two recommendations for LOCOG.

As you know, LOCOG engaged thoroughly on this report, appearing in front of the Committee and providing a full written submission. We welcomed the report as a contribution to our thinking and approach.

Recommendation 1 – “We recommend that LOCOG publish the number of tickets at each price point for each event when the public sale starts on 15 March 2011”

The number of tickets available in each price category has been a constant work in progress, and any snapshot would be quickly out-of-date. We told the Committee during its inquiry that we would not publish ticket numbers in each category, but that the numbers of tickets in each one would be broadly equal in most sessions.

At this stage, our venue seating bowl plans are not yet finalised. As you know, every venue requires a licence and permission that will stipulate the total capacity allowed at each event, and seating numbers are subject to us obtaining these. Applications for our licenses are being submitted now, including a phased series of events for our new venues, which we are happy to take you through. There is a separate process for temporary venues, which as you can imagine present particular challenges. Following confirmation of capacity, the total number of seats in each price category within each venue will then be subject to the following:

- The position and numbers of accredited seating to be taken (primarily but not exclusively the Press)
- The position and numbers of Olympic Broadcast Service cameras and equipment within each venue
- The position and numbers of required entrances and exits
- The need to identify then the level of seating available, to define the “best seats in the house” for top-price tickets, and then working through the other price categories (seats next to the field of play are not always the “best”)

The venue and ticketing teams at LOCOG are working hard to maximise the numbers of tickets that will be available at the Games. All the information that we give out must be accurate and up-to-date.

Recommendation 2 – “We recommend that LOCOG sets out in its response to this report, by May 2011, what final bids for tickets it received from sponsors, central government, the Mayor and local authorities; and how many it provided to each”

LOCOG is making 8% of the 8.8 million Olympic tickets available for sponsors and stakeholders to purchase, separate from the 75% of tickets available through the UK application process to the public.

As you know, LOCOG has signed up each of our sponsors through a competitive tender process. Within that process, the sponsor secures the right to purchase a small number of tickets at full price. This number is part of the commercial agreement between LOCOG and the sponsor and as such is subject to commercial confidentiality. However, I would like to note that many sponsors are making their tickets available to the public through a range of promotional activities, for example this week coca-Cola has launched its own ticketing campaign.

The Government is purchasing 9,000 Olympic tickets from LOCOG at face value. The Mayor's Office/GLA is purchasing around 800 tickets. LOCOG offered London local authorities to purchase 100 tickets each. From those not claimed, the six East London Host Boroughs were offered a further 100. It is a matter of public record which have taken up our offers. All of these are at a range of sports, venues and prices. It is up to the bodies to explain what they will use the tickets for.

We are now working through a similar process for Paralympic tickets.

Update on Olympic tickets

After the initial rounds, more than 850,000 people were successfully allocated over 3.5 million Olympic tickets.

We completed the first round of Olympic ticket applications, with more than 1.9 million people applying, submitting applications for 22.5m tickets. Demand massively exceeded supply in popular sports and sessions, and especially at weekends. Demand was greatest for the Opening Ceremony, which saw more than 2 million requests, and Athletics which saw more than 1 million requests for the Men's 100m final. Overall, LOCOG conducted 1,500 ballots out of 2,500 price points. At least 95% of those that applied were UK residents, and the same counts for those that have been allocated tickets. We also completed the second round, which was on a first-come, first-served basis.

Update on Paralympic tickets

We have now completed the initial round of Paralympic applications. Ballots have been run, and 9 out of 10 people who applied are likely to be allocated some or all of their ticket application. Payments will be taken between today (18th October) and the end of the month.

116,000 people applied for 1,146,000 tickets. Sixteen sports saw at least one price category oversubscribed, and therefore went to ballot. The most popular sports were Athletics, Swimming and Track Cycling.

Next steps

The remaining Olympic and Paralympic tickets will take place in December. There will be no ballot, the tickets will be sold in real-time, online and by phone. Just to note, the only Olympic tickets remaining are football.

Next Spring, when seating plans are finalised and licenses obtained, contingency tickets will go on sale. LOCOG estimates currently that these will amount to around 1 million tickets and will be across all sports and most price categories. There will be no ballot, the tickets will be sold in real-time, online and by phone. We will prioritise these tickets for those people that originally applied and were unsuccessful.

Remaining tickets will be on sale next year right up until the start of each event, subject to availability.