



# CAFE

CENTRE  
FOR ACCESS  
TO FOOTBALL  
IN EUROPE

## **CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme**

Centre for Access to Football in Europe

## Contents

What is audio-descriptive commentary?.....	3
About CAFE and the CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme .....	4
CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme .....	5
About the training.....	7
Technical equipment and broadcasting frequency licence.....	10
Ongoing support and legacy .....	11
Contacting CAFE .....	11



## What is audio-descriptive commentary?

Most partially sighted and blind people do not travel to football matches or live events where there is no audio-described commentary service. As such, they may be excluded from many cultural activities that most of society would take for granted.

**To ensure better inclusion within football stadia, an audio-descriptive commentary service should be provided for partially sighted and blind fans. The service could also assist many other supporters in the stadium.**

Live commentary can be provided in a number of different formats and by using various mediums. An easy way to consider audio-commentary is to think about how a commentator usually delivers information via the radio and TV. Both are different in that the listener of a radio programme relies completely on the description of an event or match whereas a TV viewer will usually pick up much of the information in a visual context alongside a commentary or dialogue.



The specially trained commentator provides additional narration that describes all significant visual information such as **body language, facial expression, scenery, action, clothing, colours** and anything else that is important to conveying the image, venue, match, event or surrounding ambience. During the match, the commentator should describe the on-pitch action rather than talking about statistics or tactics or providing lengthy summaries of previous action.

In the context of a live football match, audio-descriptive commentary ensures that the partially sighted or blind fan (listener) has a complete understanding of the match he or she is attending and is able to more fully enjoy the match day experience alongside fellow fans.

CAFE promotes an inclusive solution that allows partially sighted and blind fans, as well as all other fans, to tune into the audio-descriptive commentary via a smartphone or personal radio. Therefore there is no reason why partially sighted and blind fans cannot sit anywhere within the stadium bowl, rather than all having to sit together in a dedicated section.

**CAFE has found that many fans that are not partially sighted or blind enjoy tuning in to audio-descriptive commentary and feel it enhances their overall matchday experience.**

## About CAFE and the CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme

Disabled people are the largest minority group at >15% and rising (World Health Organization) and it can be fairly assumed that many of the one billion disabled people living today will be football fans – the world's most popular sport. Many can still only aspire to watch live football with many stadiums around the world not yet accessible and inclusive.

The Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE) was established in 2009 with support from UEFA to improve access and inclusion across the game using the special influence of football.

**CAFE works with national associations, leagues, clubs, disabled fans, fans groups, NGOs and key stakeholders to ensure a more accessible and inclusive matchday experience for disabled fans across Europe.**

Further, by raising awareness and sharing best practice solutions, CAFE aims to improve access and inclusion across the game so that disabled people can take their rightful places as spectators, players, volunteers, coaches, administrators, and as leaders and decision makers.

**Audio-descriptive commentary is a specialist matchday service that enables partially sighted and blind spectators to enjoy live matches alongside their fellow fans.**



Due to its relative ease and low-cost in implementing, audio-descriptive commentary is becoming an increasingly popular service at football stadiums.

**Having identified the requirement for a robust training package and certification to ensure high standards, CAFE has established the CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme. CAFE intends to support the growth of this service across Europe and beyond.**

CAFE has a wealth of experience in providing audio-descriptive commentary services at live football matches and tournaments, including at every match during UEFA EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine, and at UEFA EURO 2016 in France.

Additionally, CAFE has worked with UEFA for a number of years to provide audio-descriptive commentary at its competition Finals – the UEFA Champions League Final, UEFA Europa League Final and the UEFA Super Cup.

CAFE's works in providing audio-descriptive commentary have also extended to outside of Europe, and the service was delivered at all 2014 FIFA World Cup matches played in Belo Horizonte, Brasilia, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo.

**In total, CAFE has provided its expert training package to over 100 volunteer audio-descriptive commentators, helping them to develop their skills and to provide the service on an ongoing basis.**

In providing audio-descriptive commentary training, CAFE has adopted a 'train-the-trainer' approach. This has meant that the audio-descriptive commentary project participants can also help to train the next generation of audio-descriptive commentators and create a legacy of inclusion.

## CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme

CAFE has devised an expert programme to ensure that a high standard of training is delivered to all trainees.

**CAFE works with a number of audio-descriptive commentary trainers, who have been endorsed as providing CAFE's certified training programme.**

All CAFE-approved trainers have worked closely with CAFE before to provide audio-descriptive commentary training, or have taken part in the training programme themselves.



Trainers will deliver a robust package that will prepare trainees both to deliver audio-descriptive commentary and also to provide future training themselves.

**These trainers have either provided the CAFE training programme previously, or have successfully completed the programme themselves.**

CAFE-certified trainers are based in a number of different countries and can provide audio-descriptive commentary training in a range of languages.

For further information please email [adc@cafefootball.eu](mailto:adc@cafefootball.eu).



Additionally, the trainer will also be required to advise the host club or venue on obtaining broadcasting frequencies for the purpose of audio-descriptive commentary, and suitable technical equipment (including advising the club / venue's technical team on professional installation as required).

## About the training

The programme consists of five key stages:



### Recruitment

- CAFE's experience has found that young media students, aspiring journalists and those already taking their first steps into a career in the media often make the best trainees, though the programme is open to everybody.
- **CAFE would suggest as a minimum that at least double the amount of required commentators should be selected.** This will ensure that a number of reserve volunteers are on-call to cover any unexpected issues that may later arise.



## Training seminar

- The trainer will organise the first specialist training seminar, to be hosted by the club or venue.
- The trainer will stress the importance of completing the programme, and the positive impact that audio-descriptive commentary can have on disabled people's matchday experience.
- There will also be a series of exercises to increase awareness and develop specific skills, with regular feedback from the trainer.



**It is crucial that partially sighted and blind people are also invited to the seminar, to highlight the importance of audio-descriptive commentary and to help the trainees to develop their skills.**

**By the close of the seminar, there should be a noticeable difference in each volunteer's confidence and ability to provide an audio-descriptive commentary.**

## Remote training

- CAFE would recommend allocating 4-8 weeks for this. The training should focus on a different aspect of the match each week, with audio files sent to the expert trainers to offer feedback and continued support.
- The training programme will intensify as each week passes and the trainee's understanding of the service develops.
- Before commencing their live match training, the trainees should have commentated on at least one whole match and been provided with feedback on this.



## Live match training

- Before the end of the training, the trainees will deliver a full audio-descriptive commentary at a live football match.
- The club or venue would be required to host this practice at a live match, and identify partially sighted and blind fans to attend the match and provide feedback. Their feedback is vital, and will help the volunteers to develop their individual skills.
- The trainees should provide their commentary with a partner, incorporating all of the skills that have been developed through their training.



**This stage is effectively the dry-run for the final delivered service, and so it is vital that trainees are fully prepared. Commentators should treat their training seriously and professionally, and be eager to improve their skills ahead of their first commentary.**

## Certification

- All trainees who complete the CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary training programme will be **presented with an official CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary programme certificate, demonstrating that they have been trained in line with CAFE's standards and are suitable to provide audio-descriptive commentary at live matches, tournaments and events.**
- Commentators will be qualified to provide audio-descriptive commentary training in the future, and will also have the opportunity to join CAFE's Audio-Descriptive Commentary training programme's list of recommended trainers. There may also be the possibility for future cooperation with CAFE, such as at Finals and tournaments.



## Technical equipment and broadcasting frequency licence

It is important that trainers are able to advise event hosts on the technical requirements for installing audio-descriptive commentary at their venue.

CAFE endorses an inclusive system that allows listeners to tune into the commentary using their own personal radios and compatible devices. For this to work, the audio-descriptive commentary must be transmitted via an FM radio frequency with no delay for the listener. This requires an analogue or digital transmission, as well as a suitable mixer and may require an antenna being installed within the stadium bowl.



The audio-descriptive commentators should deliver the service from the stadium media tribune, with supporters able to tune in from anywhere within the stadium.

In order to broadcast audio-descriptive commentary, it may be necessary to secure a broadcasting frequency. The requirement and method of doing so varies across countries and the host club or venue's technical team should be able to advise further.

**For more information on technical arrangements for audio-descriptive commentary, please feel free to contact CAFE.**

## Ongoing support and legacy

The CAFE audio-descriptive commentary training package is specifically designed to allow the volunteers to replicate what they have been taught and train others to provide the service. This 'train the trainer' model provides a real legacy once an audio-descriptive commentary service has been established at a venue, and encourages a knock-on effect where audio-descriptive commentary continues to be introduced at other events.

CAFE is always happy to offer its assistance and support to voluntary audio-descriptive commentary

services. CAFE views audio-descriptive commentary as essential in providing a totally inclusive and accessible experience for all people, and thus is keen to promote any audio-descriptive commentary services that are in place.



## Contacting CAFE

For further information about the CAFE Audio-Descriptive Commentary training programme, or to register your interest in joining the programme, please contact CAFE in one of the following ways:

- **Email:** [adc@cafefootball.eu](mailto:adc@cafefootball.eu)
- **Call:** +44 (0)20 8621 2405
- **Post:** CAFE,  
1 Olympic Way  
Wembley  
London  
HA9 0NP  
United Kingdom

[www.cafefootball.eu](http://www.cafefootball.eu)

Alternative formats of this document are available on request

# Total Football Total Access Total Sense