

# SFA Chief condemns threats to referees



Following reports of threats made against referee John Beaton in connection with his performance in the recent game at Ibrox between Rangers and Celtic Ian Maxwell, Chief Executive of the Scottish FA said: "It is with deep dismay, that in the last 24 hours, we learned of one of our match officials having had threats made against him and his family.

"We are in close contact with those involved and with Police Scotland to ensure that they are safe and that those responsible are identified and held accountable for their actions.

"This is not the first time in recent weeks that our match officials have been targeted. Another referee was allegedly threatened and assaulted at a lower-league game prior to Christmas. These incidents are isolated but are they are unacceptable and extremely concerning when they occur. "Our match officials make hundreds of decisions each game. They take huge pride in their work but it is inevitable and accepted that some of their decisions will be viewed differently and debated by others. When differences of opinion however manifest as threats to our officials or their families, a line has been crossed.

“Match officials are a vital part of the game and they work exceptionally hard to maintain high standards. We all have a responsibility to support our match officials and, as previously stated, we will shortly be engaging with stakeholders to allow them to discuss issues, air concerns and propose improvements to this area of our game.

“As we look forward to 2019, I call on everyone involved in Scottish football, from the public parks to the international stage, to respect our match officials.”