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NPoCC SIB Public Safety Events Threat Assessment May 2023

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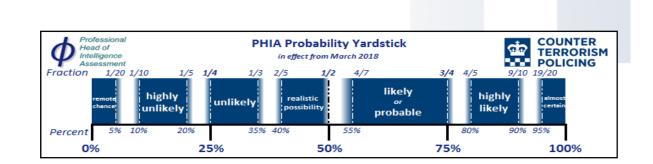
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Purpose

- The purpose of this document is to proportionately and lawfully share information to inform both UK policing and law enforcement stakeholders:
 - > To assist them with the development of assessments and event planning in line with policing's core duties.
 - > To prevent and detect crime.
 - > To keep the peace and to protect life and property.
- This product provides an assessment of current and emerging trends in the events space, including festivals, arena tours, sporting events and other large or crowded licensed events.
- The product will provide a forward look on factors that may have an impact on risk and threat for public safety.
- The products will be produced on a monthly basis.
- Please contact NPoCCMailbox-.SIB-Events@met.police.uk with questions or feedback.

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National Assessment

NPoCC SIB have received reports on 12 events for the period 20 April to 17 May 2023. This includes events that have occurred over a period of several days such as festivals and concert series.

It is **highly likely** that as the main outdoor season commences from the Spring Bank Holiday weekend onwards, reported incidents will increase. This is partly due to the perception that the festival and summer season presents a greater risk regarding safety, criminality and safeguarding. It is also **likely** that a minority of people will take advantage of the crowded environment and vulnerability of attendees to commit criminality. The first report from an outdoor festival was received this month. This highlighted criminality of the theft of mobile phones around a dance music stage, drug dealing, and welfare issues.

The behaviour of attendees at events continued to be reported as causing concern, with links to criminality and safeguarding. There were no discernible trends across the behaviour – there were reports of assaults, aggressive behaviour, racial and homophobic incidents. Excessive consumption of alcohol is **likely** to be a significant contributory factor, with reporting also reflecting concerns for welfare from excessive consumption. It is **highly likely** as the outdoor festival season progresses there will be further reports of criminality, behaviour and welfare affected by any excessive alcohol consumption.

Industry good practice to address safeguarding was utilised at an event in the North West region. A safeguarding/welfare company was employed to support and deal with vulnerable adults (through drink or drugs) and children. This reduced the involvement of police and security, enabling them to focus on other event requirements.

Protest at cultural and sporting events continues to gain traction both in national media and on social media platforms. This includes further action taken by an animals rights protest group at the Scottish Grand National. Short-term disruption was also reported at the National Conservatism conference in London, an activist gaining access to the podium whilst an MP was speaking. There is a **realistic possibility** of the risk of protest at any sporting or cultural event. There are a number of factors assessed that are likely to increase the risk:

•Televised event: Opportunity to reach maximum audience

•Significance in cultural or sporting calendar: Increased likelihood of reaching national headlines

- •Controversial sponsorship: Those deemed complicit in aiding the protest cause
- •VIP attendance: Increased likelihood of reaching national headlines

It is **highly likely** the ethical usage of live facial recognition at events will be debated again. South Wales police recently utilised this technology at a music concert in Cardiff, which received national media reporting. This technology was also used by Metropolitan Police during the King's Coronation. Civil liberty groups claim the technology is discriminatory towards certain members of society and that it violates privacy. There is a **realistic possibility** further campaigning will take place where this technology is used at events that may spark protest.



https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-65602036



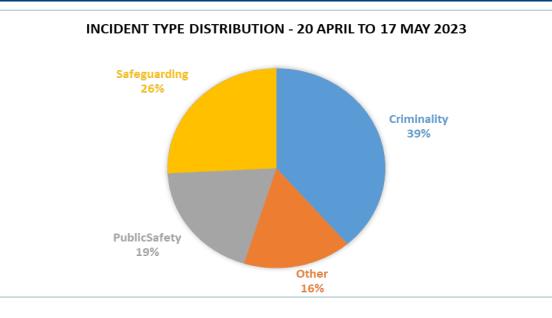
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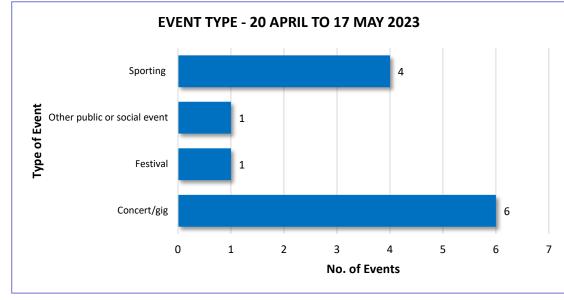


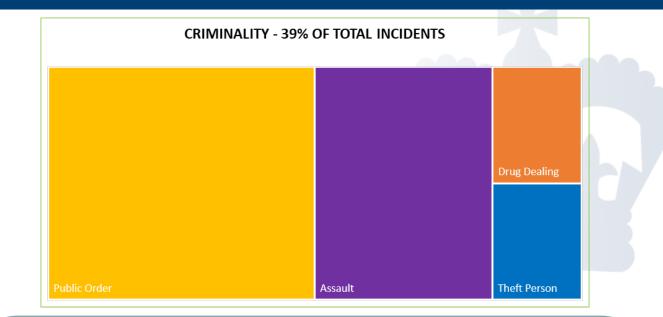
https://www.independent.co.uk/climatechange/news/co2-emissions-buddha-b2343258.html



Dashboard – 16 March to 19 April 2023







Criminality or public safety incidents mainly took place at music venues/concerts or sporting events. It is **likely** reporting will reduce for indoor concert settings moving to the outdoor festival season from the end of May 2023.

Criminality at events has emerged as the main thematic over the last month. This has included reporting of assaults, racist, homophobic and aggressive behaviour of attendees. There have been reports of staff being assaulted whilst in the process of their work. It is **likely** this type of behaviour will continue, exacerbated by excessive alcohol and illegal drug consumption. The first report from an outdoor music festival season was received, which identified theft of mobile phones and drug dealing. It is **highly likely** as the outdoor festival season progresses there will be increased reporting of thefts and drug dealing as criminals exploit the opportunities that these environments present.

Safeguarding issues continue to be reported. Most incidents have related to the welfare of attendees regarding excessive alcohol consumption.

Other types of incidents have included incidents of protest, staff integrity and traffic management. It is **highly likely** that events will at times present a wide range of challenges for organisers and police.



Strategic Public Safety Events – Forecasting

Political

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- **Geo-politics:** Perceived disparity in the Government response to the event industry during Covid-19.
- **EU Exit:** The challenges of industry and touring due to EU legislation. Wider impact of staffing at larger events.
- Sensationalism: Media and social media platforms exacerbating extent of disorder at events.
- Significant Incidents: Traction of significant occurrences around events such as the protests at sporting events gaining national/international media coverage.
- **Police priorities**: Competing demands on police resources to support large/high risk events.
- **Industry Staffing:** Shortages and lack of experienced staff working in the events industry.
- **Sponsorship and Partnerships:** Perception of negative repute of a company, organisation or event involved in partnering/sponsoring an event influencing the likelihood of protest.
- Safety Advisory Groups (SAGs): Inconsistencies across the country in decisions made at SAGs.
- **2010 Equality Act:** Sporting bodies/authorities interpretation when constructing transgender policy.
- **Protect Duty (Martyn's law):** Pending UK wide legislation that will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.
- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971: Proposal to classify nitrous oxide as a class C drug under the act.
- **Permitted development right for temporary recreational campsites** – Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities have proposed additional rights around recreational campsites.



Organisational

Forecasting Summary

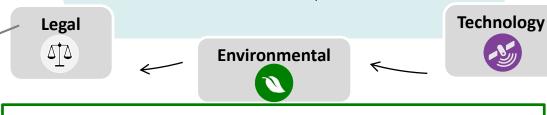
Economic

Social

It is **likely** that the current impact of costs to individuals, workers and businesses involved in the events industry will influence the ability to sustain the capability to run some events. There is a **realistic possibility** that government may be perceived as not providing adequate industry support.

It is **likely** that media and social media platforms will continue to influence sentiment on evolving incidents and concerns around safety, at times publishing disproportionate and exacerbated commentary. Social media is also **likely** to contribute in influencing crowd behaviour and criminality including fraud. Economic pressure, perceived injustices and concerns around the repute of companies/sponsorship are **likely** to add to the general negative sentiment with potential calls for mobilisation for protest at sporting and cultural events.

There are a number of upcoming large events in the next six months that are **likely** to challenge event organisers, police and supporting agencies. This is with the usual background of festivals, sporting, community events, music tours and similar events. Social issues and tensions, crowd behaviour and evolving modus operandi utilised by criminals and opportunists are **likely** to also exacerbate these capabilities.

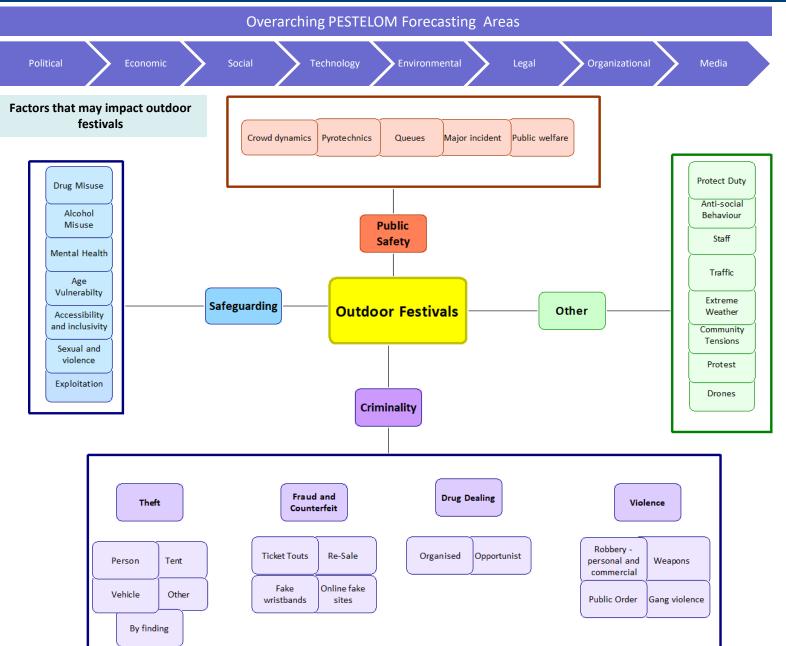


- Extreme weather: Inclement weather leading to safety concerns/cancellation of events.
- **Green priorities:** Development of green and sustainability policies at event venues and festival sites. This includes recycling and biofuel schemes.

- **Cost of Living:** Cost of living influencing ticket sales and consumer choices. Ability of organisers and venues to resource events due to rising cost of commodities. Impact on regular earnings and equipment costs for performers.
- Energy Prices: Increasing costs of energy prices effecting the overall running of events. Venues and linked businesses were not covered by the energy price cap. Coalition of sporting bodies have written to the UK PM regarding the ongoing energy crisis.
 - Large events: Upcoming large events including Eurovision, Coronation and international sporting events.
 - Social and community issues: Narrative on violence against women and girls at events and the night time economy.
 - Behaviour: Deterioration of crowd behaviour.
 - **Community tensions:** Impact of events in communities including noise, littering and behaviour of attendees.
 - **Social Media:** Influencers/celebrities utilising social media platforms to encourage behaviour and activity at events.
 - **Digital Opportunities**: Prospects of fraud through online marketplaces and social media selling event tickets.
 - Drones: The availability of cheaper and better equipment for reconnaissance and live streaming of events of interest.
 - Facial recognition: Use of AI technology by police resulting in conflict with human rights groups.
 - Payment Technology: Advancement and use of biometric/contactless payment options.



Strategic Public Safety Events – Outdoor Festival Season



National Assessment

It is **highly likely** that the upcoming outdoor festival season will present challenges to both organisers and police that will require planning to mitigate the risk.

It is **likely** a minority of people will take advantage of the crowded environment to commit criminality. Certain crowd demographics in the music arenas are more conducive to 'pickpockets' enabling the ability to evade detection. The close contact of crowded environments also has a **realistic possibility** of attracting a minority of individuals that will commit sexual harassment and sexual offences.

Other types of thefts have a **realistic possibility** of occurring in the campsites of festivals. Due to most events going 'cashless' or providing card payment options, items such as mobile phones have a **realistic possibility** of being favoured by offenders. However cash will be stolen if available. Linked car parks have a **realistic possibility** of being targeted for theft due to vehicles left unattended over a lengthy period.

Safeguarding issues are **likely** to present for some attendees due to vulnerabilities. Factors influencing include age, excessive alcohol and illegal drug consumption. It is **likely** that there will be a minority of offenders that take advantage of these factors to commit sexual offences, violence and to exploit. The welfare of individuals are also **likely** to be at risk through the affects of illegal substances and excessive alcohol.

Drug dealing is **highly likely** to occur at some music festivals. This is **likely** to be a combination of opportunist dealers selling to their friends to organised dealers. It is **likely** organised dealers will seek access and methods of entry to the event through infiltration, staff access, and pre-plant of drugs at the site.

Protest has a **realistic possibility** of taking place at events that have a live televised feed with a significant national/international audience. Other factors influencing protest are likely to include sponsorships, controversial performers, environmental impact, and animal welfare concerns.



MO Tactics - Concealment

National Assessment:

It is **highly likely** over the next six months there will be individuals or groups attempting to conceal items to take into events. Most items are **likely** to be concealed by attendees for personal use, such as illegal drugs and alcohol in attempt to avoid payment in the venue or festival site. There is also a **realistic possibly** of attendees attempting to conceal other items such as weapons and pyrotechnics. Methods of concealment will vary from hiding on the person, including 'plugging', to adapting or purchasing products specifically made to conceal items. Specialist items for concealment can be bought online, on occasions advertised specifically for illegal purpose. These items and tips to conceal are also **likely** to be shared on social media platforms to spread the knowledge.

Tactic Image	Details	Event Type
How not to get caught at festival They look just like normal sunglasses Concealment compartment in arm	Adapted Sunglasses April 2023 – sunglasses have been advertised on social media as a way to conceal drugs	N/A
Adapted drinks Can Festival in North West region 2022	Adapted drinks can August 2022 – attendees were stopped at the entrance to a festival and were searched - six cans of alcohol with hides filled with plaster of paris were discovered with large quantities of various types of controlled drugs.	Festival



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National Assessment

It is **highly likely** sporting events and cultural events of significance will continue to be targeted by protest groups over the next six month period. Based on a review of seasonal trends from 2022 and 2023, current intelligence and data available, the greatest threat emanates from Environmentalism, Animal Rights and Internationally Inspired protest groups.

This reporting period a further protest was conducted by the animals rights group Animal Rising (AR). An incursion was reported at the Scottish Grand National, which gained significant traction after the previous action at the Aintree Grand National – this resulted in the arrest of activists. It is **likely** the group will attempt to disrupt further sporting events that involve animals, with their aim to end horse racing, start a conversation about our relationship with animals, and transition to a plant-based food system.

Whilst protests were conducted at the King's Coronation, these did not result in significant disruption to the event. However the arrest of anti-monarchy protesters did cause traction and significant reporting in national media. Extinction Rebellion with the disrupted the speech of Tory MP Jacob REES-MOGG at the National Conservatism conference to call out the ideologies of senior Cabinet members and MPs.

The significance of the events targeted is **highly likely** to raise the profile of the tactic and has encouraged further commentary from across the political and social spectrum. As the tactic gains momentum, it is also **likely** to inspire other protest groups and causes.

Industry have attempted to find solutions to disrupt future protest actions. The protest of Just Stop Oil (JSO) at the World Snooker Championship has prompted the Matchroom president to contact attendees affected to join Small Claims action against the protesters. There is a **realistic possibility** that if this counter-action is perceived to be successful, the tactic will evolve or become less frequent. (1)



15 May 2023 – Protest at National Conservatism Conference

Image source - https://news.sky.com/story/jacobrees-mogg-protester-storms-stage-duringspeech-to-warn-of-fascism-12881437



22 April 2023 – Protest at Scottish Grand National

Image source -

https://news.sky.com/story/scottish-grandnational-protests-animal-rising-demonstratorsarrested-after-disruption-at-ayr-racecourse-12863550

Forward Look

It is **highly likely** protest at events with significant live media coverage will be undertaken by specific protest groups such as JSO and AR, and remains a **realistic possibility** by other groups.

Animal Rights activists are **almost certainly** likely to target events that are deemed to exploit animals for entertainment. Environmental groups are **likely** to target events that will have maximum disruption or media coverage that will generate debate. Internationally Inspired activists are **highly likely** to target events that are deemed complicit in oversees current affairs or political and social controversy.

There is a **realistic possibility** that further coverage of decisions made by sporting authorities regarding female transgender participation in elite sports will provoke protest. Recent announcements have been made for British Cycling to ban transgender from the female category of its competitions following a review and consultation.

There is a **realistic possibility** that performers and speakers that are perceived as controversial will spark campaign and protest at the venues to pressurise venues to cancel the performances.





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