

NPoCC SIB Public Safety Events Threat Assessment February 2023

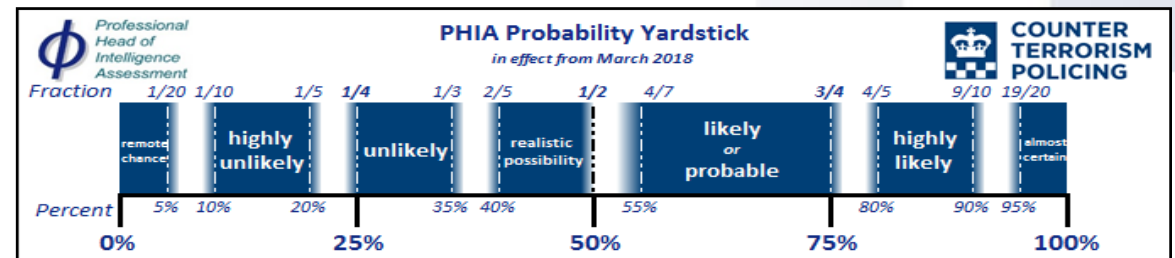
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Purpose

- 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 will provide 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 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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NPoCC SIB have received reports on 15 events for the period 12 January to 15 February 2023. Public safety incidents were reported at 14 of these events. There continues to be a reduction in reporting of incidents. It is **highly likely** this can be attributable to a number of factors including; reduced policing presence or involvement in lawful events over the winter period, under reporting of incidents such as theft and reduced frequency of events. It is also **likely** due to the perception that the festival and summer season presents a greater risk of safety, criminality and safeguarding affected by the temporary environment and criminal opportunities.

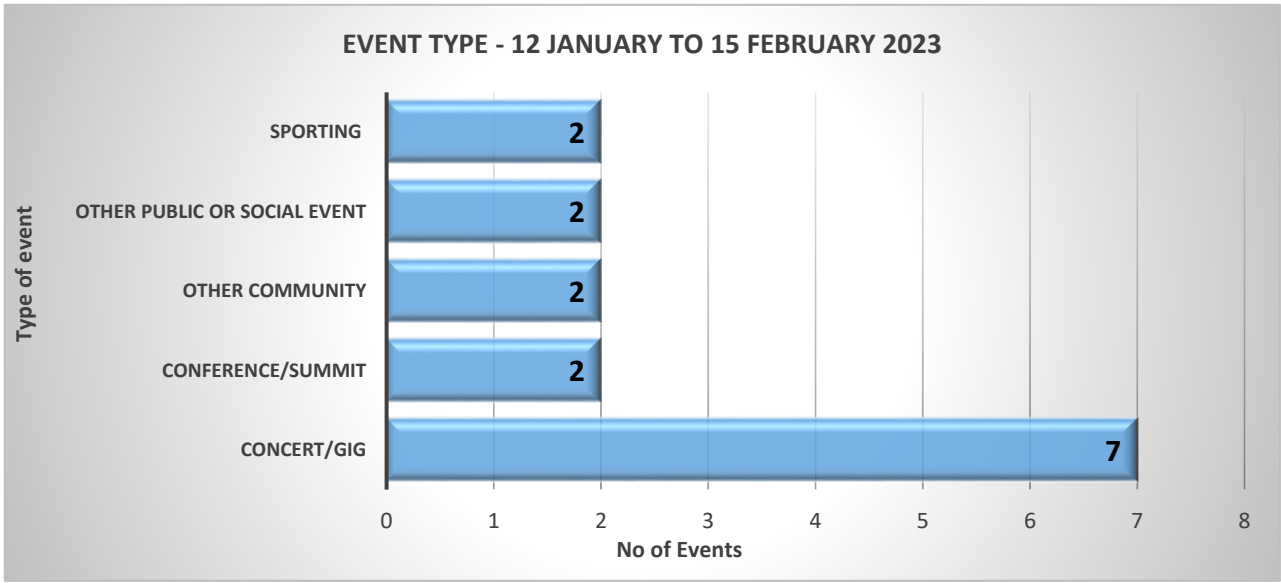
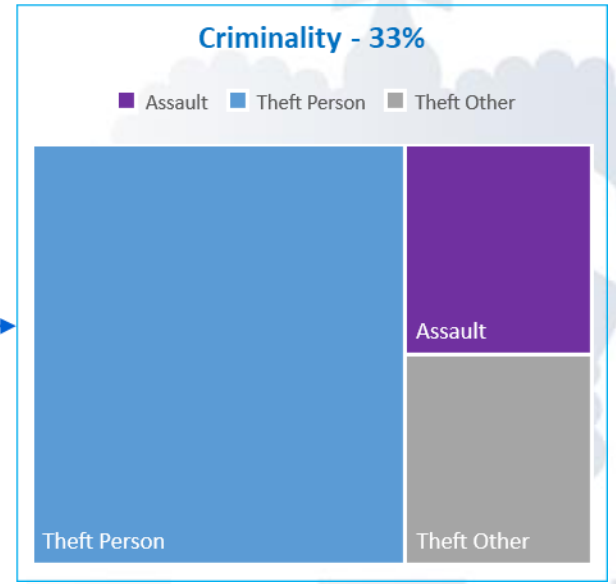
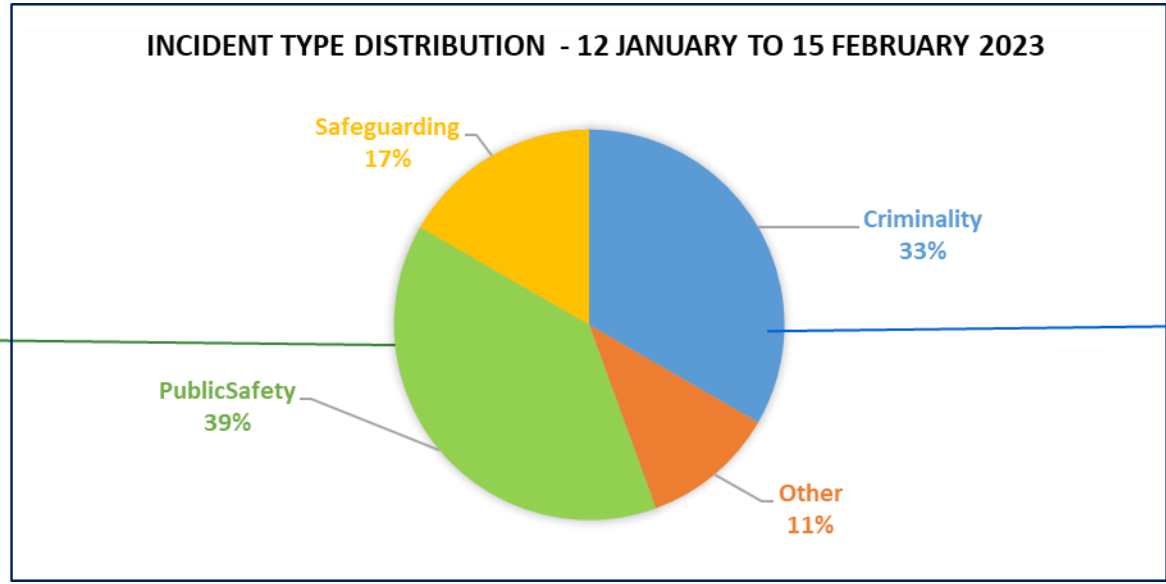
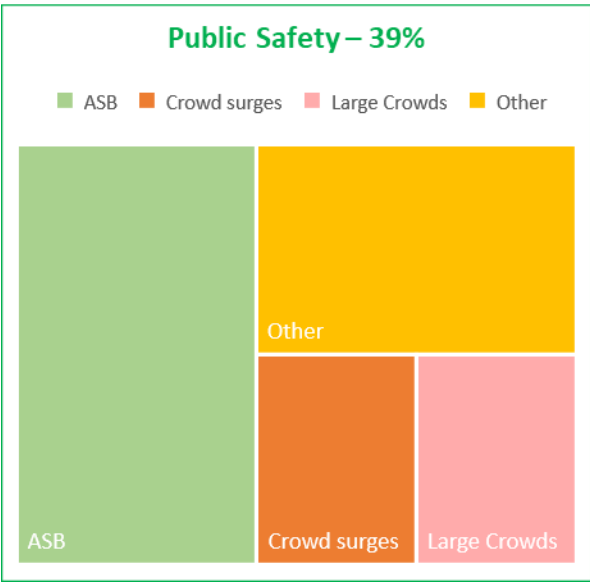
Despite the reduction in reporting, there are a number of strategic trends identified. Theft of mobile phone offences have occurred at music events and crowded environments over the reporting period. A music tour took place across Europe, the theft of mobile phones reported at some venues. There is a **realistic possibility** perpetrator/s used the opportunities afforded by the music genre crowd dynamics to hinder their detainment and identification. Other thefts are **likely** to have taken place at crowded venues that have not been reported to police. This could be attributed to a number of factors, including the acceptance as a loss due to no insurance or delayed reporting in home force area different to the venue.

Individuals and protest groups continue to utilise the opportunities of public events to raise their profile and awareness of their cause. The protests may be directly linked to the theme of the event (for example, animal rights groups protesting at a horse racing event), or utilising live media opportunities to capture other protest sentiment. There is a **realistic possibility** disruption tactics will continue to be utilised by protest groups and individuals such as social media pranksters as the spring/summer seasons for festivals and upcoming large events commence. This includes significant events such as the Eurovision Song Contest. Spontaneous incidents are **likely** to test the capability of organisers, venues, and police to mitigate risk.

Reporting has continued regarding issues of crowd behaviour across a spectrum of event types including music and community. No discernible trends have been identified but there is a continuation of issues including reporting on a minority of attendees whose behaviour on occasion has lead to incidents of assault and disorder, crowd surges and general anti-social behaviour. There is a **realistic possibility** attendees under the influence of excess alcohol or illegal drugs disproportionately contribute to the behaviour. This conduct has a **realistic possibility** of the requirement of security and police intervention if the risk escalates. It is **highly likely** similar behaviour will continue across the events spectrum as crowd demographics and behaviour is **unlikely** to change in the short term.

Looking ahead in the event calendar, there are a number of large events that are **almost certain** to attract international media attention and traction. This is against an already demanding calendar of seasonal events such as festivals and sporting tournaments. Scanning of key external influences for public safety events raises factors of **likely** relevance in the next six months. These include social influences of violence against women and girls (VAWG) in these event environments to the impact of financial implications and support.





Public Safety issues accounted for 39% of reported incidents. Anti-social behaviour was most prevalent. Other behaviour was reported such as concerns regarding large crowds and crowd surges.

Although numbers are relatively low, theft from person incidents have commenced again with reporting across European music tours. These are predominantly the theft of mobile phones. These took place at concerts and crowded environments that are **likely** to provide an environment to evade detection of the perpetrator.

Most criminality or public safety incidents took place at music venues/concerts. It is **likely** reporting will continue to be higher at music concerts over the next two to three months due to the high volume of music tours taking place. Reporting is **likely** to decrease at indoor music concerts from the end of May 2023, incidents increasing at outdoor festivals as these types of events recommence.

National Assessment

Theft offences have been reported across three different event environments over the period. These have comprised of theft of mobile phones and internal theft by staff.

Mobile phone theft offences were reported at a music tour across the UK and Europe. Thefts took place in the North West and London regions in the UK dates of this tour. The close crowd dynamics enables potential offenders to avoid detection and presents a normalised scenario to be in close contact. Previous thefts have been reported at similar punk/metal genre music events. It is **likely** not all mobile phone thefts that have occurred on this and other music tours in the UK have been reported to police. There is a **realistic possibility** that having no phone insurance is a reason for some victims to not report the theft to the police. There is a **realistic possibility** that music tours and festivals assessed by criminals as providing more opportunities for theft will be targeted in the upcoming months, with reported indicators already of further thefts as we move into the latter part of February 2023.

Mobile phone thefts have also been reported during the Chinese New Year celebrations, again perpetrators utilising the opportunities of the crowded environments to evade detection.

A member of staff employed at a venue for an awards ceremony was alleged to have committed a theft. There is a **realistic possibility** that at times a minority of employed staff will exploit their position for criminal gain.

Incidents of Note

- **January 2023: (International)** - a European tour commenced for a well-known punk band. Reports were received that theft of phones had taken place in Luxemburg, Belgium and Austria, with more than 90 phone reported lost/stolen at one event. Thefts occurred at two events in the UK of the same tour. Whilst not the same high theft numbers reported in other European locations, at least 10 phone thefts were recorded for one event. There is a **realistic possibility** that organised theft groups will have attended some UK events despite low thefts reported, in order to assess criminal opportunities against crime prevention/security tactics employed by the venues.
- **January 2023: (Merseyside)** – five theft of mobile phones were reported during the Chinese New Year celebrations, believed committed through ‘pickpocketing’ means.
- **February 2023: (Metropolitan)** – a staff member employed to assist in catering for an award ceremony was removed for an alleged theft.



Image NPoCC SIB

Future Look

It is **likely** indoor venues, particularly music tours will be targeted where crowd dynamics are conducive to enabling undetected theft. Mobile phones and other high value goods in crowded spaces are **highly likely** to remain an attractive commodity to steal for individuals and groups as a means of financial gain.

Organised groups are **likely** to target varied dates on specific tours across the country, in order to evade recognition. This includes the **realistic possibility** of travelling to other international dates.

Other significant events and community celebrations attracting crowds are also **likely** at times to attract those hoping to capitalise on the environment whether opportunist or organised theft.

There is a **realistic possibility** that a minority of staff will seek to gain employment in event settings to commit criminality such as theft. Factors such as the cost of living or coerciveness from others has a **realistic possibility** of influencing staff members on isolated occasions to commit crime.

National Assessment

Protest activity has been reported at three events over this period, involving groups from environmental and anti-arms trade themes. It is **highly likely** the tactics and protest stunts are utilised to enhance awareness to the cause and is an effective way to reach large audiences, especially if the event is televised and/or attracts social media reporting.

Protests again have been reported around British Cycling due to their sponsorship. Although there was no significant disruption, persons using methods such as banners and t-shirts, it is **likely** that the current sponsors of British Cycling will continue to generate traction around their alleged environmental credentials. The perceived reputability of company, organisation or event sponsorship has a **realistic possibility** of influencing protest, campaigning, and boycotting at other events, venues, and governing bodies particularly on the themes of environmental and animal rights.

A further event was disrupted by a pro-Palestine protest group. They protested against weapons and technology being produced by a specific company, and highlighted recent events at the Jenin refugee camp in the West Bank. There is a **realistic possibility** of events such as dinners, exhibitions and conferences being targeted due to the attendance of those that may have capability and influence over change and policy. There is a **realistic possibility** that protest will be seen at future events specifically concerning the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, particularly where organisers, attendees or performers are from, have specific views or are perceived complicit to the conflict.

Incidents of Note

- **January 2023: Awards Ceremony (Metropolitan)** – activists disrupted an awards ceremony making reference to a defence company and the Israeli security forces' action at the Jenin refugee camp in Palestine. A member gained access to the stage and stink bombs were let off in the venue.
- **February 2023: British National Track Championships, Newport (Wales)** - a peaceful two person protest with a banner took place. They proceeded to hand out leaflets but were quickly stopped by the SIA accredited security. All materials were confiscated and returned at the end of the day.
- **February 2023: Sporting Annual Awards presentation (North West)** – as a recipient of an award at a sporting presentation walked off the podium they opened their shirt to expose a logo of a sponsor company perceived as having environmental credentials of concern. They later posted a message on their social media account about the perceived issues of the same company.



National Cycling Centre Protest - <https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/extinction-rebellion-stage-anti-shell-protest-at-british-track-champs>

Forward Look

There is a **realistic possibility** of protest at high profile events that are taking place over the next few months utilising the opportunity of the media and live televised feeds. This includes significant national and international events in May 2023 - Eurovision Song Contest and events linked to the Coronation of The King and The Queen Consort.

There is a **realistic possibility** of protest at sporting institutions or fixtures, conferences, or music events that are sponsored by companies that are perceived as impacting on the environment, or are associated directly or indirectly with human rights concerns.

There is a **realistic possibility** that the debate on trans women inclusion in women's sports will continue, fuelled by recent debates around transgender rights. It is **likely** decisions to include or exclude trans women by governing sports bodies will generate protest from opposing protest groups and traction in the media around significant sporting events.

- **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 crushing incidents with national/international media coverage.

- **Police priorities:** Conflict and limitations in policing 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 reputé 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.

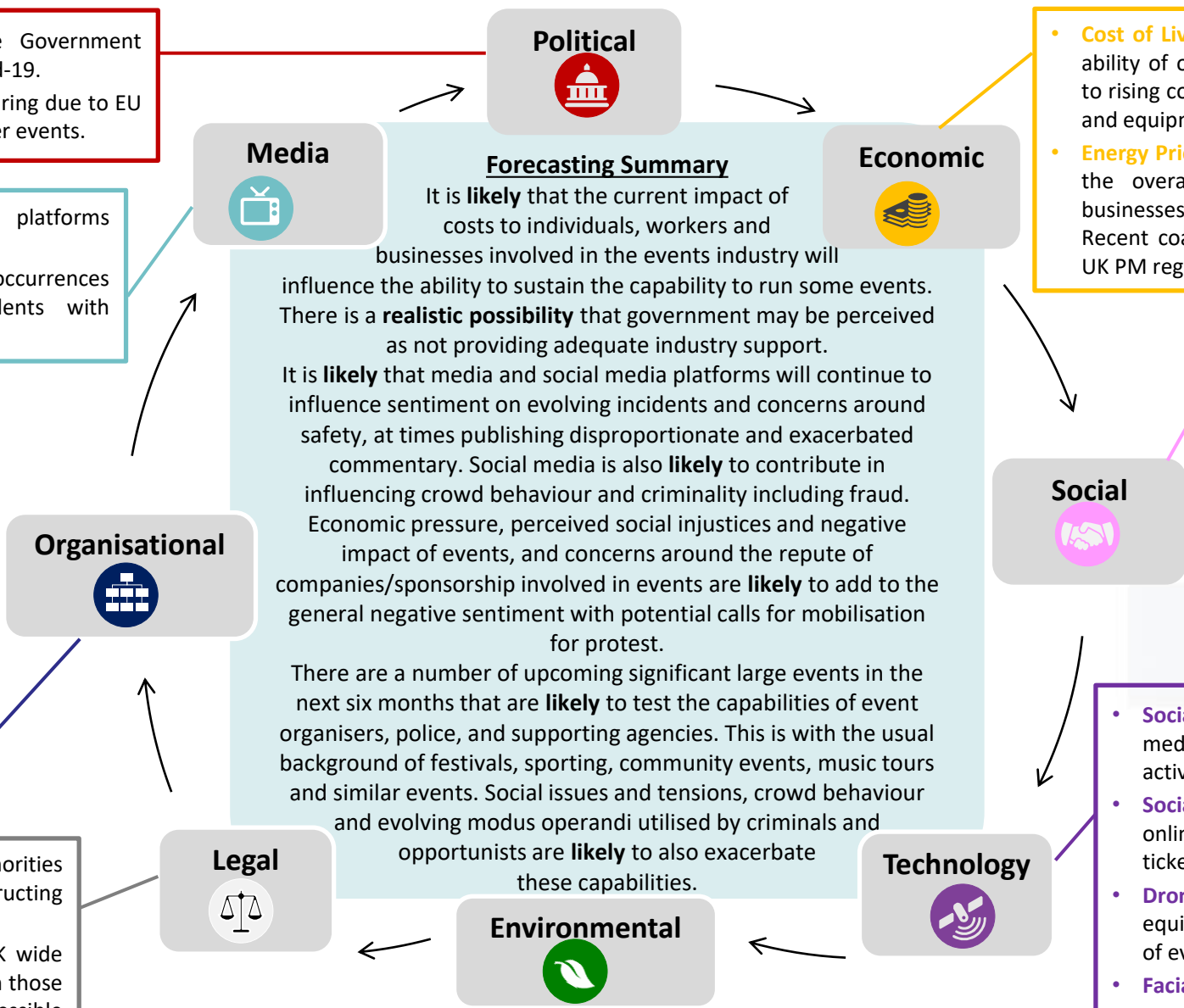
- **2010 Equality Act:** Sporting bodies/authorities interpretation of the law when constructing transgender policy.
- **Protect Duty (Martyn's law):** Pending UK wide legislation that will place a requirement on those responsible for certain publicly accessible locations to consider the threat from terrorism and implement appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.

- **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 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. Recent coalition of sporting bodies have written to the UK PM regarding the ongoing energy crisis.

- **Large events:** Upcoming large events including Eurovision, Coronation, festivals, 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 post Covid-19 restriction.
- **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.
- **Social Media:** Opportunities of fraud through online marketplaces and social media selling tickets for events.
- **Drones:** The availability of cheaper and better equipment for reconnaissance and live streaming of events of interest.
- **Facial recognition:** Use of technology by police resulting in conflict with human rights groups.
- **Payment Technology:** Advancement and use of biometric/contactless payment options.



Media

Political

Economic

Organisational

Social

Legal

Environmental

Technology

National Assessment:

It is **likely** over the next six months there will be individuals or groups aspiring to disrupt music, sporting and celebration events. Disruption is **likely** to occur for a number of reasons. It is **likely** to be used as a protest tactic to raise awareness for a specific cause. Examples of this have been reported at sporting, conferences, awards and fashion events in order to raise perceived complicity of companies for the environment, animal welfare, and human rights abuses. It is **highly likely** event disruptions will continue to be utilised by protest groups as a tactic without overt violence and disorder.

Certain events have a **realistic possibility** of being interrupted by those wanting to gain film footage of pranks and infiltration to upload to their social media platforms as a means to gain followers/subscribers and infamy. It is **unlikely** the intent is to cause harm or criminality but their actions at times can disrupt the event negatively impacting on those involved in the event and resources to eject the perpetrator/s. Disruption tactics that have a **realistic possibility** of being utilised at events are summarised below.

Tactic Image

Details



16 February 2023 - Fair fashion campaigners disrupt Fashion event, London (Image from <https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/stormed-boohoos-event-ethical-clothing-29231478>)



October 2022 - Greenpeace during Prime Minister's speech (image from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/oct/05/greenpeace-protesters-disrupt-liz-truss-speech-at-tory-conference>)

Protest 'Attendee Noisy Disruption/stage invasion'

Tactics of gaining access to events such as conferences and awards, making noises and objections whilst speeches/panels are taking place, and attempting to gain access to the stage to raise awareness to their cause. These tactics have been used by human rights, environmental and animal rights individuals and groups. It is **likely** most protesters will gain access to the events as audience attendees. However there is a **realistic possibility** a minority of protesters will gain access through fake accreditation or employment at locations.



Animal Rebellion Epsom Derby June 2022. (image from <https://metro.co.uk/2022/06/04/animal-rights-protesters-lay-down-on-race-track-at-epsom-derby-16769958/>)



Extinction Rebellion Royal Ascot June 2021 (Image from <https://metro.co.uk/2021/06/19/royal-ascot-2021-extinction-rebellion-protest-in-front-of-queen-14799039/>)



Just Stop Oil, Silverstone protest August 2022 (Image from <https://www.dorset.live/news/dorset-news/weymouth-born-just-stop-oil-8136521>)

Protest 'sports - pitch/circuit invasion'

Tactics utilised to temporarily halt an event by invading the area of the sporting activity. Although it is **likely** that the intended action is to disrupt the event and raise awareness of the cause, there is a **realistic possibility** that unintentional consequences will result in harm to protesters, staff, sportspersons and the public through their actions. It is **likely** the protesters have gained access to the events as attendees or infiltration through staffing roles.

Tactic Image

Details



Cable tie – football March 2022 (Image from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/newsbeat-60795041>)



Glue - Baftas March 2022 (Image from <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10608441/Insulate-Britain-target-Baftas-Eco-zealots-chant-Just-Stop-Oil-celebrities.html> /)



Glue - Berlinale February 2023 (Image from <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/climate-activists-glue-themselves-berlinales-red-carpet-2023-02-16/>)

Protest 'lock-on'

Tactics used to 'lock-on' to property at an event, particularly high profile televised events that are **likely** to further gain media attention. These actions will temporarily disrupt, potentially requiring specialist teams to remove the protesters. Glue and cable ties have been used as equipment to enable lock-ons. These tactics continue, most recently seen at the Berlinale in February 2023.



Doctors for Extinction Rebellion August (Image from <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2022/aug/17/doctors-for-extinction-rebellions-protest-puts-mcc-deals-in-spotlight>)



Russian flag, Australian Open January 2023 (Image from <https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/tennis/australian-open-russian-flags-ukraine-marta-kostyuk-b2270508.html>)

Protest 'flags and banners'

Activists and protesters are likely to use flags and banners in static protest outside an event or in an event to increase knowledge around the cause. This at times has a **realistic possibility** of causing tensions within audiences due to disruption or conflicts in sentiment. This was highlighted recently with Russian flags and symbols being displayed at the Australian Open, Russian and Belarusian flags having been banned at the tournament.



Animal Justice Project, National Beef Association (NBA) 2022 Expo May 2022 (Image from <https://www.itv.com/news/tyne-tees/2022-05-28/animal-rights-activists-scale-roof-at-darlington-beef-expo-to-protest-event>)

Protest 'roof incursions and damage'

Activists and protesters have used tactics such as roof incursions. If successful access is gained it is **likely** this will gain more media and social platform attention and traction, particularly if enhanced with tactics such as flares, graffiti/paint damage and banner drops. It is **likely** if this tactic is utilised that specialist 'at-height' protest removal teams will be required. This is **likely** to prolong the protest, with potential disruption to the event.

Tactic Image

Details



Boxing event - September 2022 -
<https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/boxing/youtube-prankster-conned-way-ring-27918552>



Six Nations Rugby March 2022 -
<https://www.foxsports.com.au/rugby/notorious-pitch-invader-jarvo-crushed-by-security-guards-after-rugby-stunt/news-story/5b116ef46f9bc6b54b2daaf8ebe5cd09>



Nov 2016 - X Factor
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/2271974/x-factor-stage-invader-revealed-prankster-daniel-jarvis-claims-responsibility-for-honey-g-stage-invasion/>



England Test Match - 2021
<https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/cricket/jarvo-suspended-sentence-sticky-wicket-28279956>



Eurovision 2018 -
<https://www.thesun.co.uk/tvandshowbiz/6273204/jimmy-jump-spanish-prankster-invaded-stage-uk-suries-eurovision-2018/>

Pranksters/Social Media Influencers

Events that have a **realistic possibility** of being targeted by social media influencers and pranksters in order to gain footage to upload to their social media streams. These may be incidents on 'how to sneak into' an event to those conducting pranks. It is **almost certain** this is conducted to gain increased followers and subscribers to their platforms. Industry have also raised the issue of 'YouTubers' attempting to gain entry. A recent example of disruption is of a known YouTuber and their prank of crude noises played during a live FA Cup broadcast. It is believed the individual involved had secreted a mobile phone device in the studio prior to the broadcast. The person involved has been involved in multiple pranks at sporting and live televised events.

Although it **likely** that this is seen as a harmless activity, at time this can lead to disruption to the event. This has been noted where activity has interrupted the play in sport, or performances on stage.

Previously, opportunities have been sought to sneak into the event through gaps in security including fence breaches. Infiltration utilising fake passes or domestic/hospitality uniforms has also been used as a means to gain access. It is **likely** these methods will be utilised again. There is a **realistic possibility** opportunities through volunteer posts will be used.

There is a **realistic possibility** these stunts will cause public concern of the security capability at venues and how they mitigate the threat of other types of incursions. This may include the risk of counter terrorism.

There is a **realistic possibility** that significant events such as the Eurovision Song Contest will attract attempts by individuals to sneak in and/or perform a stunt.



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