Preventing Crowd Violence

How to Create Effective Crowd Management Strategies

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*Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.* ~ Albert Einstein

Effective crowd management demands

- Management of crowd perceptions
  - Situational Crime Prevention
- Management of police perceptions
  - Six characteristics of effective strategies
Crowds are not problems…
…but crowd dynamics create opportunities for violence

Six common forms of aggression

- Verbal
- Gesturing
- ‘Missile’ throwing
- Swarming
- Property destruction
- Physical
Opportunities for Violence

• Crowd participation does not extinguish individual decision-making abilities
• Perceptions of opportunities are influenced by five major factors:

**Situational Crime Prevention**

1. Effort ➔ How big is this guy?
2. Risk ➔ Where is the closest police officer?
3. Reward ➔ How cool will I look?
4. Provocation ➔ Has the other person instigated?
5. Excuses ➔ Does the other person deserve it?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decrease Effort</td>
<td>Others can help hoist someone over or onto protective barriers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease Risk</td>
<td>Provides sense of anonymity /allows escape into crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Rewards</td>
<td>Elicit positive reaction from others when acting aggressively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase Provocations</td>
<td>Crowd swarming encourages pushing and instigates violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide Excuses</td>
<td>Alcohol consumed in mass quantities reduces inhibitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Crowd Violence “Triggers”

Venue Characteristics
- Proximity to performance
- Noise level
- Seating arrangements
- Place reputation
- Temperature

Staff Characteristics
- Training
- Experience
- Presence
- Communication

Event Characteristics
- Crowd demographics
- Importance of event
- Quality of performance
- Availability of alcohol
- Crowding
- Performer behavior
Common crowd violence “triggers” can be mitigated through opportunity reduction techniques.

**TWENTY FIVE TECHNIQUES OF SITUATIONAL PREVENTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase the Effort</th>
<th>Increase the Risks</th>
<th>Reduce the Rewards</th>
<th>Reduce Provocations</th>
<th>Remove Excuses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Harden targets</td>
<td>Extend guardianship</td>
<td>Conceal targets</td>
<td>Reduce frustrations and stress</td>
<td>Set rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Steer column locks and immobilisers</td>
<td>- Take routine precautions: go out in group at night, leave signs of occupancy, carry phone</td>
<td>- Off-street parking</td>
<td>- Efficient queues and polit service</td>
<td>- Rental agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Anti-rebbery screens</td>
<td>- &quot;Cooons&quot; neighborhood watch</td>
<td>- Gender-neutral phone directories</td>
<td>- Expanded seating</td>
<td>- Harassment codes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tamper-proof packaging</td>
<td></td>
<td>- Unmarked bullion trucks</td>
<td>- Soothing muslin/tumed lights</td>
<td>- Hotel/Registration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control access to facilities</td>
<td>Assist natural surveillance</td>
<td>Remove targets</td>
<td>Avoid disputes</td>
<td>Post instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Entry phones</td>
<td>- Improved street lighting</td>
<td>- Removable car radio</td>
<td>- Separate enclosures for rival soccer fans</td>
<td>- &quot;No Parking&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Electronic card access</td>
<td>- Defensible space design</td>
<td>- Women's refuges</td>
<td>- Reduce crowding in pubs</td>
<td>- &quot;Private Property&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Baggage screening</td>
<td>- Support whistleblowers</td>
<td>- Pre-paid cards for pay phones</td>
<td>- Fixed cab fares</td>
<td>- &quot;Extinguish camp fires&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screen exits</td>
<td>Reduce anonymity</td>
<td>Identify property</td>
<td>Reduce emotional arousal</td>
<td>Alert conscience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Ticket needed for exit</td>
<td>- Taxi driver IDs</td>
<td>- Property marking</td>
<td>- Controls on violent pornography</td>
<td>- Roadside speed display boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Export documents</td>
<td>- &quot;How's my driving?&quot;</td>
<td>- Vehicle licensing and part marking</td>
<td>- Enforce good behavior on soccer field</td>
<td>- Signatures for customs declarations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Electronic merchandise tags</td>
<td>- School uniforms</td>
<td>- Castle branding</td>
<td>- Prohibit racial slurs</td>
<td>- &quot;Shoplifting is stealing&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deflect offenders</td>
<td>Utilize place managers</td>
<td>Disrupt markets</td>
<td>Neutralize peer pressure</td>
<td>Assist compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Street closures</td>
<td>- CC TV for double-deck buses</td>
<td>- Monitor pawn shops</td>
<td>- &quot;Idiots drink and drive&quot;</td>
<td>- Easy library checkout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Separate bathrooms for women</td>
<td>- Two clerks for convenience stores</td>
<td>- Controls on classified ads</td>
<td>- &quot;It's OK to say No&quot;</td>
<td>- Public lavatories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disperse pubs</td>
<td>- Reward vigilance</td>
<td>- License street vendors</td>
<td>- Disperse troublemakers at school</td>
<td>- Litter bins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control tools/ weapons</td>
<td>Strengthen formal surveillance</td>
<td>Deny benefits</td>
<td>Discourage imitation</td>
<td>Control drugs and alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- “Smart” guns</td>
<td>- Red light cameras</td>
<td>- Ink merchandise tags</td>
<td>- Rapid repair of vandalism</td>
<td>- Breathalyzers in pubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Disabling stolen cell phones</td>
<td>- Burglar alarms</td>
<td>- Graffiti cleaning</td>
<td>- V-chips in TVs</td>
<td>- Server intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Restrict spray paint sales to juveniles</td>
<td>- Security guards</td>
<td>- Speed humps</td>
<td>- Censor details of modus operandi</td>
<td>- Alcohol-free events</td>
</tr>
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</table>
New Year’s Eve in Las Vegas
New Year’s Eve on the Strip

- Four-mile long casino-resort corridor on Las Vegas Boulevard
- Approximately 400,000 people attend the annual event
- Second largest New Year’s celebration in the United States
At MGM Grand Hotel and Casino - north view of the Strip

People gathered in front of Cesar's Palace

Photos: PubClub.com
## INCREASE EFFORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situational technique</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Harden Targets</strong></td>
<td>• Movable <em>barricades</em> protect police from crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Grease applied to light posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Access</strong></td>
<td>• Pedestrian walkways closed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deflect Offenders</strong></td>
<td>• Movable barricades manage pedestrian traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ambulances, emergency vehicles, and garbage trucks strategically placed to manage vehicle traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Tools/Weapons</strong></td>
<td>• Plastic cups / bottles for beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trash bins and plastic cups kept within barriers</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Barricade Strategy

6:00PM
Las Vegas Blvd closed to vehicle traffic – barricades keep pedestrians on sidewalks

7:00PM
Officers move barricades toward the boulevard center as crowd size increases

8:00PM
Pedestrians restricted only from center lanes as the midnight fireworks display approaches

Geographic Features

- Casino
- Las Vegas Blvd
- Barricade
- Crowd
- Police officers
**INCREASE RISKS**

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Assist Natural Surveillance</td>
<td>• Barricade strategy improves officer ability to observe crowd behavior and increases officer visibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilize Place Managers</td>
<td>• Coordination with casino staff to enhance crowd monitoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Strengthen Formal Surveillance | • Live-feed video surveillance  
• Use of correctional staff  
• Horse patrol enhances observation and visibility |
# REDUCE REWARDS

## Situational technique

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceal Targets</th>
<th>• Conceal property that would invite vandalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remove Targets</td>
<td>• Remove exterior casino fixtures that can be moved</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deny Benefits</td>
<td>• Disruptive participants are removed from the crowd</td>
</tr>
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## REDUCE PROVOCATIONS

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<th>Intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Frustrations &amp; Stress</td>
<td>• Fireworks displayed evenly along the Strip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid Disputes</td>
<td>• Officers encouraged to converse with crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Barricades prevent contact between officers and crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce Emotional Arousal</td>
<td>• Officers dressed in “soft” uniforms rather than militarized / riot gear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutralize Peer Pressure</td>
<td>• Off-Strip arrest processing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discourage Imitation</td>
<td>• Rapid action against disorderly crowd members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Situational technique

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Set Rules</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Supervisors approve arrests to reduce officer misconduct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fireworks signal end of event</td>
</tr>
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<th>Assist Compliance</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Portable toilets provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Trash bins provided</td>
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</table>
Six elements of effective strategies

Mindset

Focus: Law & Order versus Safety
Officers in riot gear or dressed down?
Leadership

Focus: Setting the tone
Supervisors approve arrests
Six elements of effective strategies

Dialog

Focus: Promoting positive interactions
Offering plastic cups / conversing with crowd
Six elements of effective strategies

CPTED
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

Focus: Managing the crowd environment
Barricades / removing fixtures
Six elements of effective strategies

Law

Focus: Removing hazards
Bottle and can ordinance
Learning

Focus: Identify failures and successes
12-month planning process
Strategy Effectiveness

- Citations
- Misdemeanor Arrests
- Felony Arrests

2006:
- Citations: 55
- Misdemeanor Arrests: 116
- Felony Arrests: 51

2007:
- Citations: 58
- Misdemeanor Arrests: 53
- Felony Arrests: 27

2008:
- Citations: 42
- Misdemeanor Arrests: 39
- Felony Arrests: 1
Increase Effort
- Harden Targets
- Control Access
- Screen Exits
- Deflect Offenders
- Control Tools

Increase Risks
- Extend Guardianship
- Natural Surveillance
- Reduce Anonymity
- Place Managers
- Formal Surveillance

Reduce Rewards
- Conceal Targets
- Remove Targets
- Identify Property
- Disrupt Markets
- Deny Benefits

Reduce Provocations
- Reduce Frustrations
- Avoid Disputes
- Reduce Emotional Arousal
- Neutralize Peer Pressure
- Discourage Imitation

Remove Excuses
- Set Rules
- Post Instructions
- Alert Conscience
- Assist Compliance
- Control Drugs & Alcohol
Useful Resources

Center for Problem-Oriented Policing
Download free @ www.popcenter.org
Contact Information

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