

Civil Disturbances – Crowds

Recent history – consider:

- Press relationship with demonstrators & police, tactics of demonstrators & police
- Likely arsenal of demonstrators & police

Before event – if possible

- Location of demonstrators & police
- Low or high profile
- Concealed entries / escape routes
- Secondary locations
- Emergency meeting points
- Location of your vehicle
- Action in emergencies
- Test communications

Briefing to colleagues

- Tasks – in pairs best
- Ground familiarisation
- What if.....
- Potential threats - Baton guns and anti riot equipment, Rubber bullets, Grenades, Riot shields, CS gas, with dye or water, Water cannons, Sticks & stones, bricks etc.
- Clothing & equipment to wear/take - Protective equipment, PPE, Helmets, ‘bump’ caps, Fire extinguishers, Fire blankets, Fire proof clothing. Elbow, knee, groin & shin pads
- Codewords if necessary

Do’s

- Remain in safe position – only enter ‘hot’ danger zones for short periods.
- Keep backs to walls, beware of barriers, fences & of being trapped against them
- Work in pairs & keep each other informed
- Look around you – situational awareness & escape routes identified
- Avoid drunk or drinking elements of crowd
- Beware of where the Police line is – don’t become trapped in-between crowd & police

Signs of crowd deterioration

- Increases in noise, surge movements, changes in mood & tensions
- Missiles being thrown – rocks etc. to Petrol bombs
- Crowd become aggressive
- Police/military adopt a more aggressive stance
- Stockpiling of specialised equipment – Police – water cannon, horses, APCs. Crowd – Missiles, weapons

Look-out for:

- ‘Packs’ of men isolating female reporters

Must haves

- Escape plan – more than one for each pair
- Medical evacuation plan – kit carried on each person, locations to get to, be picked up, what transport is available to medevac.
- How do I call it? Where will it take me?
- Sexual assault plan - escape routes, action after it occurs